

Developmental Disabilities Council  
Reading Cover Page

Date: March 16, 2006

Meeting: Public Policy Committee

**Reading Number: 06-P3**

**Issue: Task Force on Employment  
Policy - Progress Report**

Included in this Reading:  
Notes from first meeting of task force.

Background/Summary:  
The task force has met once to begin talking about the Working Age Adult Policy and employment issues. The next meeting is Friday, March 31.

Action:  
None. Information only.

If there are any questions, please contact Donna Patrick at 1-800-634-4473 or [donnap@cted.wa.gov](mailto:donnap@cted.wa.gov)

## **Working Age Adult Policy Taskforce**

### **February 17, 2006**

Attendance – DD Council members Mike Hatch, Vickie Foster, Leo Finnegan & Larry Garman, Rehabilitation Enterprises of Washington (REW) David Wunderlin, and Partnership 2020 Carrie Masten.

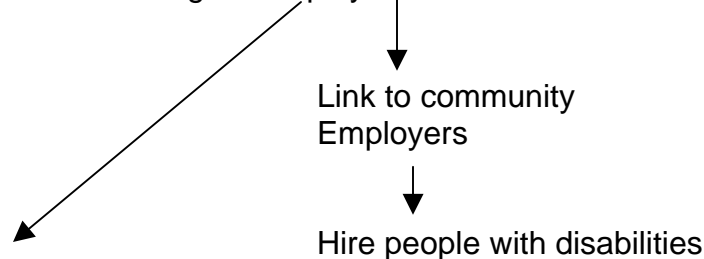
Staff: Clare Billings & Linda Walling

Absent: DDD, Janet Adams, Tacoma Pierce County DD, Denise Rothleutner and Kittitas County DD Bruce Tabb

#### Introductions were made

#### Players

DDD & counties provide funding to Employment Providers



Held responsible for employment outcomes

#### Who else should be players

Schools, Parents & Residential Providers

#### Public Relations

Employment providers should be working with schools, residential providers, & community businesses on employment pathways.

Note: Chamber of Commerce would be a good connection & parents & others can get involved here

#### Comments

- ✓ Employment problems are prior to the policy
- ✓ Policy is vague – leaves room for inconsistency/personality driven decisions at the local level, will this be monitored?
- ✓ Career paths should have the goal of community based employment

#### Parents perspective & concerns

- Explore options
- Volunteer work should count in career path
- Sheltered/specialize industries should count in the “pathway”

- School districts should be held accountable for doing meaningful transition plans that include employment training/skill development and opportunities. Noted that some schools don't necessarily want to help kids get employed – this is not acceptable
- School districts should be partners with DDD/counties/employment providers and brought in early in the planning process
- Coordination between transition programs to DVR to employment needs to be improved and consistent across the state.
- Linkages/roles are not well defined or consistent
- Looks like the "Policy" is a way to take people off the rolls?

### Policy Review:

Questions about Definitions & Terms

"Steady movement" ←

- ✓ no timeline
- ✓ *flexible*
- ✓ how will this be measured?

What meets this criteria and who decides?

Progress "steady movement" needs to be based on individual ability and *their* plan

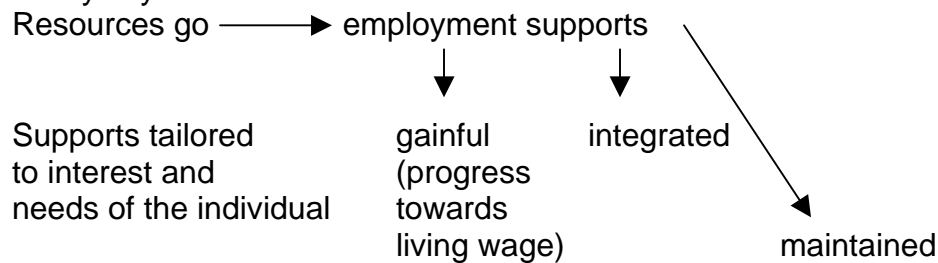
- Fairness/equality/consistently applied – how will this happen?
- Policy needs to have "intent" or vision statement with "affirming language"
- Is less than fulltime employment going to be ok? 20 hrs a week an exception?
- Arts avocation - Will this be considered an employment outcome?
- What are employment providers getting paid in each county? How can we find out?
- The policy sets a very high bar – integrated & living wage
- Living wage is a problem (rent, food, transportation, medical)
- How about if the policy said "pursue jobs equal to their abilities", or as far as potential can take them, minimum wages and above, rather than "living wage"
- What happens if someone loses their job, do they go back to job development?
- Individual employment plan "career path" updated yearly

### What happens to Choice?

- To work or not to work, no longer a choice – is this right?
- JWOD – (federally awarded contracts to firms hiring 75% or more people with disabilities) - this not integrated employment, but often pays a living wage with benefits, are these jobs not going to count?
- Individual's choice/self-determination – where does this fit in?

Are the definitions in the policy based on "legally defined terms?"

Policy says:



Questions/concerns:

What about day programs, are these part of the “pathway”, “sheltered employment/enclave” are these part of a “pathway”?

What if someone doesn’t make it to “integrated, gainful & maintained employment?” will they lose their supports? At what point along the pathway will this happen?

The Policy implementation should be monitored to assess intended and unintended impacts/consequences of the policy over time. How will this happen? Benchmarks should be set to measure against whether or not the policy is a positive move, or has negative impacts of people with dd.

How will this impact folks with aging parents? No advocate to help navigate the system. Who will do this for them?

Suggested that the employment providers should do this and be held responsible for assuring these folks get the support & help they need to make good choices along the way.

What about exceptions to policy, what are those? How will these be consistent? Fair?

Note: Choice should not have to be an exception to policy



Based on individual’s self-determination

Would like to know from DDD on why no parent involvement was included in the policy, parents play a key role and often help get jobs for their sons & daughters. Parents are very concerned that their kids will end up with no supports, sitting home, needing someone to be with them and having lost their support \$s.

Barriers to employment:

transportation

rural areas where there are not a lot of jobs anyway.

Resources – is everyone going to get **all** the funding needed to implement the policy?

Access to jobs

Goal setting & dreaming of possibilities – who helps this happen? Schools?

Information is key, now will people have the information they need to make good choices? Who holds the power? The person or the system?